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## Timeline of UK Media and Middle East Experts' Anticipation of the rise of ISIS and UK government reactions

### Authors:

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Timeline: 10 April 2013 – 14 June 2014

Selection of timeframe: This open source analysis starts on 10 April 2013 when the group declared itself Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham and ends on 15 June 2014 shortly after the Northern Iraq offensive when ISIS rapidly captured Mosul. A few weeks before the Fall of Mosul, on 24 May 2014, the first ISIS-inspired terrorist attack happened in Brussels (a shooting in a Synagogue). This timeline only looks at information available in anticipation of the crisis. ISIS' terrorism in Europe and the capture of Mosul showed the group's military strength and its global reach. After this point, the developments had reached "crisis levels" and the reporting changed in frequency and intensity.

NGOs: International Crisis Group (ICG), Human Rights Watch (HRW), and Amnesty International

Media: Financial Times, The Guardian, The Times, The Telegraph (ranging from left-liberal to liberal-conservative quality media)

Keywords: Overall, approximately 600 publications have been considered for this timeline. The primary database to search for the newspaper articles was *Factiva* and the keywords search included "Islamic State," "Syria," "Iraq," "ISIS," "Al-Qaida in Iraq," "Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham" "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant," "ISIL," and "Jabhat al-Nusra." For NGOs, reports were searched in the respective search engines of the NGOs with the same keywords as for the newspaper articles.

Colour code: Different elements have led to ISIS' rise to power. In the timeline, each of these factors are presented in a different colour, as follows:

- **ISIS becoming a force in the Syrian civil war:** its ability to gain territories in northern Syria, capturing oilfields for its financial sustainability.
- **ISIS terrorism and becoming a force in Iraq:** the groups increasingly brutal terrorist campaign (coordinated car bombs, prison breaks, and roadblocks) and Maliki's government poor governance, sectarian divide, alienation of Sunni population, and the army's lack of cohesion. This is also linked to a lack of Western engagement.
- **Control of territories in Syria and Iraq:** ISIS' ability to govern territories through a brutal and cruel terror regime. This includes ISIS' strict enforcement of Sharia law, kidnappings, crucifixions, force-marriages (increased reports about this from January 2014 onwards).

- **Redrawing of borders and the Syrian civil war spilling over to Iraq:** from April 2014 onwards the two civil wars became a lot more entangled or “merged.”
- **ISIS foreign fighters and terrorist repercussions:** with increased numbers of foreign fighters, media reports about the threat of terrorism in Europe increased. Syria returnees were seen as the biggest risk, the threat of self-radicalisation was rarely mentioned before April 2014.
- **ISIS online recruitment:** ISIS’ employed a professional propaganda machinery through social media, with which it could reach virtually anywhere around the world. The media reports mention also the challenge of countering online-based self-radicalisation.
- **Other pressing agendas/ISIS distractions:** mainly the discussion about the Syrian government’s use of chemical weapons.
- No colour either means the line covers more than two or three elements, or none of the above.

Data accessibility: Readers can easily find the articles through the title, newspaper, and publication date.

Date	Crisis development / turning points	Knowledge claims by experts	UK government actions and impact of claims at decision-making level
March 2013	Jabhat al Nusra becomes dominant in rebel areas		
10 April 2013	Announcement that Jabhat al Nusra merges with ISI and is henceforth known as Islamic State of Iraq and Syria/Sham (ISIS). Al Nusra immediately rejects this and appeals to Al-Qaida for judgement.	Iraqi al-Qaeda joins Syrian rebels in merger that will alarm the West, <i>The Times</i> , Anthony Loyd and Sheer Frenkel. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS merger with Jabhat al-Nusra (equivalent to AQ in Iraq) creates a much stronger rebel force in Syria. <b>Quote:</b> “Barely a year ago, the Syrian rebel group was a little known organisation seen only on the occasional video clip on obscure websites. Today, however, they boast thousands of fighters across Syria and are present on every major frontline in the country. Hundreds of foreign fighters, including nationals from Britain, France and Libya, have joined the ranks of Jabhat al-Nusra and the group has risen to prominence through a series of high-profile attacks and suicide bombings against forces loyal to Mr Assad.”	
12 April 2013		The rise of al-Nusra, <i>RUSI</i> , <a href="#">commentary</a> by Ranj Alaaldin. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> The merger between Jabhat al-Nusra and AQ in Iraq does not come as a surprise but is significant as it	

		demonstrates the group's rise, strength and confidence, which is mainly down to the poor performance of Syria's moderate opposition forces. <b>Quote:</b> "The rise of al-Nusra is attributable to the lacklustre performance of Syria's mainstream opposition forces: their lack of organisation, internal squabbling and lack of legitimacy inside Syria allowed for more organised movements like al-Nusra to dominate the resulting gap that emerged and position itself as the dominant military force on the ground."	
15 April 2013		The al-Nusra Front 'merger': Underscoring the growing regionalisation of Al-Qaida, <i>RUSI</i> , <a href="#">commentary</a> by Raffaello Pantucci. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Jabhat al-Nusra's message in response to al-Baghdadi, repositioning itself in alliance with Al-Qaeda core, is in an effort to retain its standing as a credible force against the Assad regime and to keep its focus in Syria. This signals that Al-Qaeda and its affiliates' focus will be a regional rather than international one for now. <b>Quote:</b> "The message from al-Jawlani is a confusing one. On the one hand he seems to be pushing back against an overt alliance with the Islamic State of Iraq(a group he has admitted connections to), but at the same time, he is pledging direct allegiance to Al-Qa'ida core. The intent seems to be to strengthen the link to the centre while distancing himself from the group that he is most likely to benefit from materially." "It seems clear that Syria has become the brightest flame on the jihadi map."	
18 April 2013			Britain and France claim that chemical weapons have been used in Syria.
26 April 2013		Middle-class boy who grew up to be a ruthless jihadist, <i>The Times</i> , Fiona Hamilton charts the radicalisation of Richard Dart, jailed for plotting acts of terror. <b>Interesting:</b> Report about the radicalisation	

		of Richard Dart in the UK countryside from middle class British young man to terrorist conspirator.	
April 2013	Iraqi troops storm an anti-government protest camp in Haija, near Kirkuk, killing over 50 people. This sparks Sunni outrage and fuels the insurgency.		
2 May 2013		April Iraq's deadliest month in almost five years (the United Nations has said), <i>The Telegraph</i> , David Blair. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> increased sectarianism in Iraqi government. <b>Quote:</b> "Nouri al-Maliki, the prime minister of a Shia-led government, has been accused of sectarianism, purging members of the Sunni minority from his administration" Also mentions cross-country dimension. <b>Quote:</b> "Mr Maliki's undeclared backing for Mr Assad is another factor inflaming Sunni resentment inside Iraq."	
3 May 2013		Al-Qaeda sets up Sharia courts in key Syrian city; Foreign fighters are flocking to join a group that wants to create an Islamic state, <i>The Times</i> , Anthony Loyd. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Jabhat al-Nusra fully intends to create an Islamic state. <b>Quote:</b> "If it succeeds even in part, al-Qaeda will for the first time have swaths of territory abutting the borders of Israel, Turkey and Iraq — <b>a strategic nightmare for regional and Western security chiefs</b> " (highlighted by the author of timeline)	
10 May 2013			Major Arab events in 2013, <i>Kuwait News Agency</i> . David Cameron and Russian President Vladimir Putin agree on need for co-operation to help form a

			transitional government in Syria. (published on 26 Dec 2013) (DocumentKUWNA00020131230e9cq000xr)
12 May 2013		Under the black flag of al-Qaeda, the Syrian city ruled by gangs of extremists, <i>The Telegraph</i> , David Rose. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Al-nusra (soon to be ISIS) is getting more and more powerful and the population supports them. <b>Quote:</b> “taking Raqqa two months ago [...] allowed Jabhat to assume a leadership role over a large swathe of north-eastern Syria, to the Iraqi border. To many in it is a welcome development. ‘Jabhat are excellent for us,’ said Abdullah Mohammed, a man from the nearby village of Mansoura. ‘They deal with us according to Islamic rules, so there are no problems. They are honest and they run everything pretty well.’”	
18 May 2013		Al-Qaeda's Syrian wing takes over the oilfields once belonging to Assad, <i>The Telegraph</i> , Richard Spencer. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS is financing its activities by selling the product of oilfields.	
19 May 2013	ISIS takes over oil fields and starts selling crude oil to finance its military actions		
27 May 2013			EU ends arms embargo on Syrian rebels
29 May 2013		The end of Iraq, <i>RUSI</i> , <a href="#">commentary</a> by Ranj Alaaldin. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Iraq is on the brink of a civil war which will almost certainly end in its fragmentation. <b>Quote:</b> “Civil war this time round will be different, far bloodier and with far-reaching consequences for Iraq and the region. Continued sectarian tensions in the country, exacerbated by and combined with the conflict in Syria, means that fragmentation is likely to be a certainty”. “This re-militarisation of the Sunni community has dramatically increased the chances of a civil war taking place. But the war may	

		have already started. Terrorist attacks are being launched against separate Sunni and Shia targets.”	
3 June 2013		<a href="#">From the Editor</a> , <i>Chatham House</i> . <b>Knowledge claim:</b> The Syrian civil war is going to spillover across its borders. <b>Quote:</b> “Syria is different. This conflict cannot be contained within its borders. Indeed, the borders are likely to be the next casualty.”	
4 June 2013			France and Britain confirm finding evidence of the use of sarin in Syria. Shortly after, the US also confirms that sarin was used.
10 June 2013		Syria: US moves closer to arming rebels, <i>The Telegraph</i> , Richard Spencer. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> He mentions that a lot of Al Nusra fighters are joining ISIS.	
11 June 2013		Boy, 15, is killed in front of parents for 'insulting Prophet', <i>The Times</i> , Anthony Loyd. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> the article shows the cruelty of ISIS’ regime in territories under its control	
16 June 2013		We’ve left it too late to save Syria – this conflict can never be won; It would be madness to arm the rebels in what has become a brutal religious war, <i>The Telegraph</i> , written by Boris Johnson. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Johnson saw Syria as a sectarian fight with international proxies and believed that arming rebels was a bad idea.	
17 June 2013		The need to establish the rule of law and accountability in Syria’s rebel held areas, <i>RUSI</i> , <a href="#">commentary</a> by Mouaz Moustafa, Toby Cadman and Alistair Harris. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> There is a mounting humanitarian and geopolitical crisis in Syria, and the rule of law must be established in order to facilitate any state building exercises. <b>Quote:</b> “The question as to when the process of transitional justice, or more importantly the reform of the justice and security sector, should start has a very simple answer. It must begin now. The international community must assist in the long-term resolution to this problem ensuring that the future democratic	

		institutions in Syria have the resources, skills and competences to cope with the monumental, generational task that now awaits them.”	
27 June 2013		ICG: Syria’s Metastasising Conflicts, <a href="#">report</a> 143. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> the conflict has reached a certain degree of stalemate with both sides being too strong to give up but not strong enough for one side to defeat the other. Another interesting point is the cross-country sectarian divide. <b>Quote:</b> “The opposition increasingly resembles a Sunni coalition in which a radicalised Sunni street, Islamist networks, the Syrian Muslim Brotherhood, Gulf states and Turkey take leading roles. The pro-regime camp, encompassing Iran, Hizbollah, Iraq and Iraqi Shiite militants, likewise appears to be a quasi-confessional alliance.” And <b>another quote:</b> “In the words of a former U.S. official, what once was a Syrian conflict with regional spillover has become a regional war with a Syrian focus.”	
July 2012- June 2013			Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament Annual Report 2012–2013 Chairman: The Rt. Hon. Sir Malcolm Rifkind, MP. <b>Knowledge claims:</b> AQ is assessed as a whole as a terrorist threat to the UK and each region is specified individually. Pakistan is most worrying, but other AQ offshoots are too. <b>Interesting quote about ISIS (not yet called ISIS):</b> “The Agencies and JTAC assess that Al-Qaeda elements and individual <i>jihadists</i> in Syria currently represent the most



			worrying emerging terrorist threat to the UK and the West. There is a risk of extremist elements in Syria taking advantage of the permissive environment to develop external attack plans, including against Western targets. Large numbers of radicalised individuals have been attracted to the country, including significant numbers from the UK and Europe. They are likely to acquire expertise and experience which could significantly increase the threat posed when they return home. Furthermore, there is growing concern about the risks around extremist groups in Syria gaining access to regime stocks of chemical weapons.
1 July 2013			UK <a href="#">parliament</a> started the debates (and later rejects) the option of intervening in Syria or of arming its rebels. Debate name: “Syria and the Middle East”, 1 July 2013, Volume 746. Lord Wood of Anfield mentions IS for the first time in UK parliament.
July 2013			British propaganda efforts in Syria to give covert support to 'moderate opposition' – it was stepped up after the Parliament’s vote. A) to appear as “doing something” and

			B) to impress the US. (source: Middle East Eye <a href="#">report</a> , published 11 May 2020)
01 July 2013		HRW, Syrians Blocked from Fleeing War. Border Closures Leave Thousands Stranded in Dangerous Border Areas. HRW <a href="#">reports</a> that the Iraqi government had closed the al-Qa'im border crossing in Anbar province in August 2012 due to concerns 'that al-Qaeda operatives might use it to enter Iraq.'	
2 July 2013		Suicide bomber kills 22 in Iraqi Shi'ite mosque, <i>The Telegraph</i> . <b>Knowledge claim:</b> the article reports about increasing sectarian violence in Iraq. <b>Spilling over from Syria quote:</b> "Sectarian tensions have been inflamed by the civil war in neighbouring Syria, which is fast spreading into a region-wide proxy war, drawing in Shi'ite and Sunni fighters from Iraq and beyond to fight on opposite sides of the conflict. Highlighting the risks of spillover, security forces on Monday destroyed an insurgent camp near the Iraqi town of Baaj, around 30km from the Syrian border, killing 10 gunmen who were not of Iraqi origin, police said"	
3 July 2013		Boy of 16 is whipped to satisfy the public clamour for 'Justice'; The rebel response to crime and disorder is brutality in the name of Sharia, <i>The Times</i> , Anthony Loyd in Aleppo. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Sharia law is being enforced by rebel groups in the parts of Syria which will later be governed by ISIS.	
9 July 2013		<i>RUSI briefing:</i> The remaking of Syria, Iraq and the wider Middle East, Gareth Stansfield. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> The Syrian war could develop into a region-wide war, with Iraq its biggest casualty, which needs to be urgently addressed by the Western world. <b>Quote:</b> "Is Syria on the verge of collapse? And could Iraq, in particular - as well as Lebanon, Jordan and Israel - survive this eventuality? The answer is a tentative Yes to the first question and a probable No to the second."	

12 July 2013		<p>Syrian rebel infighting grows as al-Qaeda kills rival commander, <i>Financial Times</i>, By Michael Peel in Abu Dhabi. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS is said to have killed an important leader of the Free Syrian Army. This might lead to the US reneging on their intention to give weapons to the FSA because they don't trust anyone else. <b>Quote:</b> the "killing not only deprived the US of a commander with whom they were comfortable but left Mr Idriss with the tricky task of trying to quell al-Qaeda's influence on the rebellion without provoking the collapse of the opposition movement."</p>	Syrian rebels will return arms at end of uprising, says minister, <i>The Times</i> , by Laura Pitel. The UK parliament debates whether they should arm the Free Syrian Army.
18 July 2013		<p>HRW, God and intolerance, Sectarianism in the Muslim world is dividing people who have lived together for centuries. <a href="#">HRW</a> reports that the conflict in Iraq is 'becoming more viciously sectarian than ever' and that 'Syria's civil war has helped fuel the sectarian tensions coursing through the region.' It further warns: 'President Bashar Assad and his cronies exacerbated the sectarian divide by demonizing pro-democracy activists as extremists and jihadists. Now their bogeyman is becoming real. The uprising has morphed into an armed rebellion increasingly co-opted and dominated by armed Sunni Islamist groups, including foreign fighters, some with overtly sectarian agendas.' HRW concludes that sectarianism in Iraq and Syria is 'partly a consequence of upheaval' and partly 'a product of resilient patterns of authoritarianism, discrimination and impunity'.</p>	
21 July 2013	In an attack on Abu Ghraib high-security prison, ISIS organised a mass breakout of 500 prisoners, most of whom were senior members of al-Qaeda who had received death sentences. In a		

	<p>simultaneous attack on Taji prison, the escape of inmates could be prevented. A total of 26 Iraqi security forces and over 20 civilians were killed in both attacks. These prison breaks had been meticulously prepared for over a year and officially ended ISIS' 'Breaking the Walls' campaign, and initiated the "A Soldier's Harvest" campaign, which was more concerned with gaining and controlling territory.</p>		
23 July 2013		<p>Jailbreaks and suicide bombers push Iraq back towards anarchy, <i>The Times</i>, Hugh Tomlinson. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Maliki government is said to being at the brink of collapsing and Syria and Iraq might merge into one conflict. <b>Quote:</b> "Governments in the region are fearful that the conflicts in Iraq and Syria are now merging, with a sectarian turf war between Sunni and Shia being fought out across two countries. Theodore Karasik is quoted, saying: "The two conflicts have essentially merged."</p>	
24 July 2013		<p>Al-Qaeda is thriving amid the chaos of Iraq, <i>The Telegraph</i>, David Blair. <b>Interesting quote:</b> "Do the security forces serve the country, or the government of Nouri al-Maliki? In other words, are they a national security force, or the armed wing of a sectarian faction?"</p>	

24 July 2013			Israeli director of military intelligence warns that Syria is becoming a “centre of global jihad”
25 July 2013		Militants kill 14 Shi'ites after checking ID cards at makeshift roadblock in north Iraq, <i>Telegraph</i> . <b>Quote of knowledge claim:</b> “Sunni Islamist militants have been regaining momentum in their insurgency against the Shi'ite-led government in recent months, invigorated by the civil war in neighbouring Syria, which has inflamed sectarian tensions in Iraq and the wider region.”	
29 July 2013		Multiple car bombs kill dozens across Iraq, <i>FT</i> , <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Severe increase in sectarian violence cause worry about another civil war. <b>Quotes:</b> “The blasts - 17 in all - are part of wave of bloodshed that has swept across the country since April, killing more than 3,000 and worsening already strained ties between Iraq's Sunni minority and Shia-led government. The scale and pace of the violence, unseen since the darkest days of the country's insurgency, have fanned fears of a return to the widespread sectarian bloodletting that pushed Iraq to the brink of civil war after the 2003 US-led invasion. [...] ‘The country is now facing a declared war waged by bloody sectarian groups that aim at flooding the country with chaos and reigniting the civil strife,’ the ministry said in a statement posted on its website. Sunni extremist groups such as al-Qaeda's Iraqi branch, known as the Islamic State of Iraq, frequently use co-ordinated blasts like those on Monday to try to break Iraqis' confidence in the government and stir up sectarian tensions.	
30 July 2013		The Shia and the battle for survival, <i>RUSI</i> , <a href="#">commentary</a> by Ranj Alaaldin. A good account of the ascendancy of the Shia in Iraq. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> The Syrian conflict is now being defined by Iraq and the survival of the Shia. <b>Quote:</b> “In Syria, it is the ascendancy and relevance of the Shia identity that is being fought	

		<p>for...the removal of Assad would also undermine their authority by emboldening Iraq's anti-government militants and empowering the country's Sunni, who have become disenfranchised with the rule of the Shia.”</p> <p>“For the Assad regime, survival now depends on sustaining the sectarian dimensions of the conflict and the coalescing of its core supporters, the Allawites, around the notion that their survival is intertwined with the survival of the regime.”</p>	
July 2013		The International Crisis Group (ICG) Crisis Watch <a href="#">reports</a> that July 2013 was the deadliest months in Iraq since April 2008, with more than 1000 people killed in insurgent operations and sectarian attacks.	
Since August 2013	<p><b>Turning point ISIS in Syria:</b> ISIS starts attacking other rebel groups (like Liwa al Tawhid, Ahrar al Sham, and al Nusra). This changes the nature of the conflict in Syria.</p>		
02 August 2013		A UN Monitoring Team <a href="#">reports</a> ISIS’ strong presence in Iraq and Syria, links between its activities in both countries and the influx of foreign jihadists into Syria. It argues that Zawahiri’s authority is limited and that ‘affiliates pursue autonomous agendas even as they draw on Al-Qaida branding’. Its ideology ‘remains infectious, supported by sophisticated digital propaganda’. As such, ‘the diversification of Al-Qaida affiliates has not reduced the threat that they pose’. It claims that al-Qaeda in Iraq / ISIS ‘continues to pursue a vicious sectarian fight with no agenda beyond the local redistribution of power’.	

04 August 2013	<p>ISIS launches a military offensive on Alawite villages in Latakia, Syria, together with four other Jihadi groups. HRW <a href="#">suggests</a> (in a publication in October same year) that ISIS was in charge and provides evidence that at least 190 civilians were killed and over 200 hostages seized.</p>		
5 August 2013		<p>Al-Qaida's August Surprise?, <i>RUSI</i>, <a href="#">commentary</a> by Raffaello Pantucci. The article explains that Western governments' terrorist threat levels have heightened following large-scale prison breaks in Iraq, Libya and Pakistan, with many closing their embassies in the MENA region in anticipation of an attack. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> As the core Al-Qaeda group recedes its affiliates are consolidating their power, with AQAP proving to be the most dangerous in terms of its ambitions of launching attacks in the West. The Syrian civil war is serving as a unifying factor for Al-Qaeda affiliates. <b>Quote:</b> "The more groups are able to consolidate their hold on pieces of territory, replenish their ranks through prison breaks and gain greater experience on the battlefield, the more experience and capability they develop. At the moment this seems something that is of greater regional than international concern, but the worry remains that eventually they might decide to live up to their international aspirations and rhetoric."</p>	

6 August 2013		<p>Islamist rebels seize key Syrian helicopter base, <i>The Telegraph</i>, <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIL gains ground in Syria. <b>Quote:</b> “Since ISIL's emergence in May 2012 ‘every major offensive in northern Syria this year has been announced, led, and coordinated by Islamists,’ said Mr Lister.”</p>	
11 August 2013		<p>HRW, Iraq: Attacks Amount to Crimes Against Humanity, Authorities Should End Draconian Responses. <a href="#">HRW</a> reports that ISIS has claimed responsibility for the series of attacks in Iraq over the past four months. It argues that ISIS’ ‘systematic policy of killing civilians’ amounts to crimes against humanity and that ‘no political goal or grievance can possibly justify this widespread and organized murder campaign, which is wreaking terrible suffering on Iraqis.’ HRW highlights that the attacks also targeted military installations and state institutions. Referring to figures provided by the UN Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), HRW reports that 1057 Iraqis were killed during the month of July 2013 and that 2326 were wounded, making it the bloodiest month in over five years. Among the dead were 333 police and security forces. HRW also reports that the acting UN Special Representative for Iraq warned that July’s violence may herald a return to civil war.</p>	
12 August 2013		<p>Iraqis blame government for lack of protection as al-Qaeda claim responsibility for deadly attacks, <i>The Telegraph</i>, <b>Knowledge claim:</b> The latest wave of bombings increase fears about a civil war. The government is blamed for failing to prevent violence, but also for being ineffective (like installing roadblocks) or overly brutal (like using torture). <b>Quote:</b> “Months of bloodshed that have sparked fears of a return to the all-out sectarian conflict. [...] Human Rights Watch, meanwhile, urged Iraqi authorities to ‘end draconian responses’ to attacks, including torture of suspects, coerced confessions and convictions based on secret testimony.</p>	
12 August 2013		<p>\$10m reward for Iraqi leader who took jihad to Syria; Iraq, <i>The Times</i>, Catherine Philp. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> with the bounty of \$10</p>	



		<p>million on al- Baghdadi, US acknowledges threat coming from ISIS.</p> <p><b>Quotes:</b> The \$10 million (£6.5 million) bounty is second only to the \$25 million reward offered for the killing or capture of Ayman al-Zawahiri, who took over as al-Qaeda's supreme leader in 2011 after the killing of Osama bin Laden. It underscores Western concerns about the threat posed by the former al-Qaeda in Iraq, now rebranded the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. The group attracts jihadis from across the Arab world to its new base in Syria. [...] Iraq's Interior Ministry has warned that it is facing "<b>open war</b>" and a return to levels of bloodletting not seen since 2006-2007.</p>	
13 August 2013		<p>Kurds open new front in Syrian war; Iraq, Catherine Philp.</p> <p><b>Knowledge claim:</b> Kurds started fighting IS. <b>Quote:</b> The conflict in the Kurdish north underscores the growing complexity of Syria's civil war, which has morphed from a domestic uprising against Assad to an all-out transnational sectarian war.</p>	
14 August 2013	ISIS pushes other rebels out of Raqqa		
14 August 2013		<p>ICG Make or Break: Iraq's Sunnis and the State, <a href="#">report</a> 144.</p> <p><b>Knowledge claim:</b> The Maliki government has for many years exacerbated the ethnic divisions in Iraq, and Sunnis now had enough. <b>Quotes:</b> "Today, with frustration at a boil, unprecedented Sunni-Shiite polarisation in the region and deadly car bombings surging across the country since the start of Ramadan in July, a revived sectarian civil war is a serious risk." The recent wave of protest originated on 23 April, when government forces raided a protest camp in the city of Hawija, in Kirkuk province, which killed over 50 and injuring 110. "This sparked a wave of violence exceeding anything witnessed for five years. Attacks against security forces and, more ominously, civilians have revived fears of a return to all-out civil strife. The Islamic State of Iraq, al-Qaeda's local expression, is resurgent." The Iraqi government is advised to:</p>	

		“prioritising the struggle against al-Qaeda’s Islamic State of Iraq, and ensure that no Iraqi fighters, whether Sunni or Shiite, cross into Syria.”	
19 August 2013		How might Syria come back to the UK?, <i>RUSI</i> , <a href="#">commentary</a> by Raffaello Pantucci. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Historically, three types of terrorist threats arise from jihadi battlefields; directed plots, self-started plots and networks that support terrorist plots. European foreign fighters in Syria have not yet produced any threats back home, however, the networks created in foreign battlefields will serve a longer-term problem where they assist individuals tasked with carrying out attacks, or become potential radicalisers. <b>Quote:</b> “Those going abroad to fight may have no intention to come back and launch attacks, but through connections they might find themselves drawn into supporting others and invariably through transmission of their experience will act as radicalising agents. Groups eager to launch attacks against the West continue to exist abroad, and it is perfectly possible that they will use these networks and communities to eventually try to direct other attacks.” On the Balkanisation of Syria: “This presents the danger of new safe havens allowing groups to train and plot”.	
26 August 2013		Wave of violence sees at least 47 killed across Iraq, <i>The Telegraph</i> . <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Violence increase massively in Iraq. <b>Quote:</b> “Sunni Muslim insurgents and the al-Qaeda-affiliated Islamic State of Iraq have significantly increased their attacks this year. More than 1,000 Iraqis were killed in July, the highest monthly death toll since 2008.”	
28 August 2013		Rush-hour suicide bomb attacks kill 71 in Baghdad, <i>The Times</i> , Hugh Tomlinson. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> IS violence in Iraq risks to lead to a full-out civil-war. <b>Quote:</b> the worst bloodshed for five years, raising fears that the country is sliding back into civil war	
29 August 2013			UK Parliament <a href="#">rejected</a> possible UK military action against Syrian

			President Bashar al-Assad's government to deter the use of chemical weapons.
30 August 2013		<p>Assad's allies are only just warming up, <i>RUSI</i>, <a href="#">commentary</a> by Ranj Alaaldin. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Western inaction early in the Syrian conflict provided an opportunity for Al-Qaeda affiliate groups to emerge as the predominant actors and shapers of the conflict as they are now better equipped, funded and organised than other groups. Consequently, if the Assad regime is toppled, such groups as ISIS will be potential victors of the war, posing a significant threat to the international community. Further, Assad's removal will result in the Iraqi government being undermined and deepening sectarian tensions in the country. <b>Quote:</b> "Toppling the Assad regime thus means handing over the Syrian state to these fighting forces that, with Qatari and Saudi backing, have sidelined the ineffective and disorganised moderate forces backed by the West." On Iraq: "The sectarianisation of the Syrian conflict means that Iraq's majority Shia fear that the downfall of Assad equates with a return to marginalisation and oppression. In other words, Iraq fears that it will be next and that forces in Syria will focus their attention on Baghdad, should Assad fall."</p>	
August 2013		<p>ICG, Crisis Watch, <a href="#">reports</a> that the security situation continued to deteriorate in Iraq, that Prime Minister Maliki has linked terrorism in Iraq to the Syrian civil war and warned about further attacks in the broader region. The government launched a counter-terrorism operation on the outskirts of Baghdad in early August in which it made over 670 arrests. The Iraqi foreign minister requested U.S. weapons and intelligence support for counter-terrorism measures. On Syria, the ICG reports that ISIS strengthened its positions along the northern and eastern fronts, which prompted alarm among opposition fighters and political activists amidst 'continued reports of repressive governance in ISIS strongholds Aleppo and Raqqa'. It</p>	

		also estimates that ‘40,000 mostly Syrian Kurds fled to Iraqi Kurdistan starting mid-Aug due to increased fighting between Kurdish militias and Islamist extremist rebel factions in Kurdish areas of NE Syria’.	
9 Sep 2013		While the Americans say they want to attack the regime, we are their real enemy, Martin Chulov, <i>The Guardian</i> , <b>Knowledge claim:</b> The article explains the perspective of the Syrian opposition that fights ISIS. <b>Quote:</b> “They [ISIS] want to kidnap this revolution. Maybe they already have. But don't mistake all the black flags you see for community support. We just don't have the stomach to fight them now.”	
13 Sep 2013		Syria: Al-Qaeda-linked rebels execute regime 'militia men' in front of children, <i>The Telegraph</i> , Ruth Sherlock Beirut. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS is described to hold territories and to have become among the strongest rebel groups in Syria. Also, some of the first extreme violence videos are being circulated (life beheadings etc). <b>Quote:</b> “ISIS has grown in prominence in recent months in Syria. Better armed, and willing to use extreme fighting tactics, including suicide bombings, the group has been at the forefront of most of the major attacks against regime installations in the north of Syria. [...]ISIS has also taken control of much of the region’s income-generating resources, such as oil, gas and grain.”	
18 Sep 2013		The new East of Suez question: Damage limitation after failure of Syria, <i>RUSI</i> , <a href="#">commentary</a> by Michael Clarke. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> The U.K. parliament’s rejection of military action in Syria has made the it seem an unreliable ally to its partners in the Gulf and to the U.S. To mitigate this, the U.K. government must clearly declare its commitment to engaging in the East of Suez. <b>Quote:</b> “The UK strategic logic as well as the dynamic of the Syrian crisis and its regional implications push the government in this direction. It has important interests to defend on the periphery of the Syrian	

		crisis even if it has little direct national interests to defend within the centre of the conflagration.” On the wider implications of the Syrian civil war: “The international community cannot address the centre of the crisis – a deeply sectarian civil war in which the political choice is between many sets of bad guys who control the fate of the victims. But the war is destabilising the region. The Levant could go into a meltdown that would see political collapse in Lebanon and Iraq, whatever happens in Syria, immense pressure on Jordan and Israel, and a not-so-proxy war throughout the region between Shia Iran and Sunni Saudi Arabia.”	
19 Sep 2013		Al-Qaeda affiliated group seizes rebel-controlled Syrian town. <i>Financial Times</i> , Borzou Daragahi in Cairo. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS takes northern Syrian city Azaz and is now in an open war with other rebel fractions. <b>Quote:</b> “Tensions between Isis and other extremist groups on the one hand and more moderate groups on the other have been building for months. But the outbreak of open warfare between the camps across several Syrian provinces creates a potentially new dimension in the two-and-half-year conflict between the Damascus regime and its opponents.”	
19 Sep 2013		Face to face with the new enemy in Syria, <i>The Times</i> , Anthony Loyd. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> The article provides a good description of ISIS’ strength, emphasising the arrival of masses of foreign fighters. Turkey is mentioned to have enabled an easy route to Syria for foreign fighters. <b>Quote:</b> “Estimated to number anything between 5,000 to 8,000, they come from as far apart as the Philippines, South America, the Caucasus, North Africa, Sudan, Pakistan and Europe.”	
19 Sep 2013		Syria's New Enemy; Moderates must find the courage to unite against the latest influx of extremists, <i>The Times</i> editorial, <b>Knowledge claim:</b> good summary of the problem of foreign fighters and explains the risks to West. <b>Quote:</b> “ISIS represents the	

		risk of a failed state at the heart of the Middle East, just as al-Qaeda in Iraq did in Baghdad seven years ago.”	
19 Sep 2013		Now Syria's rebels are fighting each other, <i>The Telegraph</i> , By Con Coughlin. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Articles argues that the UK should under no circumstances arm rebels, because weapons would end up with ISIS.	
20 Sep 2013			Syria’s allies step up pressure for peace talks, <i>The Telegraph</i> , Richard Spencer. UK foreign Secretary, William Hague, makes a public appeal for the revival of peace talks on Syria’s civil war. (Document TELUK00020130920e99k000sl)
27 Sep 2013			Scepticism greets toothless resolution on Syria’s weapons, <i>Gulf Times</i> . UK foreign secretary, William Hague, votes in favour of a resolution to eradicate Syria’s chemical arsenal during a UN Security Council meeting. (published on 29 Sep 2013) (DocumentGUTIME0020130930e99t00006)
29 September 2014	The capital of Iraq’s autonomous Kurdistan region, Erbil, is hit for the first time in six years by a series of coordinated attacks in which at least six Kurdish security forces are		

	<p>killed. According to the <a href="#">NYT</a>, the attacks in Erbil ‘demonstrated that no place in Iraq was truly safe, as the war in Syria increasingly spills over its borders and as Iraq’s own Sunni insurgent groups accelerate their attacks’.</p>		
30 Sep 2013		<p>Dozens killed as wave of bombings hits Baghdad, <i>The Times</i>, Catherine Philp. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> More violence in Iraq, which is, like in Syria, between sectarian lines. <b>Quote:</b> More than 4,500 people have been killed since then [April 2013] in the worst sectarian violence for more than five years. The overall death toll is still lower than at the height of the violence in 2006-7, but fears are growing that Iraq may be heading back to the <i>brink of civil war</i>, engulfing the region in a Sunni-Shia conflict spanning from Syria’s northern border to the Gulf.”</p>	
Sept 2013		<p>ICG, Crisis Watch, <a href="#">reports</a> that ISIS and the FSA agreed to a fragile truce on 20 September after ISIS had captured the town of Azaz. In mid-September, ISIS killed an aid worker who had been affiliated with the Salafi group Ahrar al-Sham, prompting criticism from Salafi militants. On Iraq, the ICG reports that among the attacks in September with over 660 reported deaths the series of bombings in Erbil on 29 September stood out as the first terrorist attacks in the autonomous Kurdish north since 2007. Further major attacks occurred across Iraq on 20, 21, 24, 25 and 30 September.</p>	

Since October	ISIS has its first official Twitter account		
1 October 2013		HRW, Syria: Fuel-Air Bombs Strike School, Powerful Conventional Weapon Kills at Least 12 Students in Raqqa. HRW <a href="#">reports</a> how Syrian regime forces dropped fuel-air explosive bombs on Raqqa in an (unsuccessful) attempt to oust ISIS from Raqqa after it had strengthened its control of the city. HRW also reports that it has not been able to return to Raqqa since April due to security concerns.	
2 Oct 2013		Iraq fears return to sectarian war; Rising insecurity, FT, By Borzou Daragahi, <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Signs of resurgence of civil war are clearer and clearer. <b>Quotes re ISIS:</b> “The extremist group, which has emerged as a premier power among Syrian rebels, aims to overthrow both the Damascus and Baghdad governments. [...] ‘They are the only group dealing with Iraq and Syria as one country,’ said Harith Hasan, an Iraqi scholar and writer focusing on identity politics.”	
10 Oct 2013		HRW, “You Can Still See Their Blood” Executions, Indiscriminate Shootings, and Hostage Taking by Opposition Forces in Latakia Countryside. In a detailed <a href="#">report</a> , HRW presents evidence that at least 190 civilians were killed and over 200 hostages were taken during a military offensive in Alawite villages in the Latakia Governorate on 4 August 2013. The offensive had been launched by ISIS and four other Jihadi groups and HRW suggests that ISIS had been in charge. The hostages, most of whom are women and children, are still being held by ISIS and Jaish al-Muhajireen wal-Ansar. ISIS has reportedly contacted some family members of the hostages and asked for ransom. Abu Ayman reportedly commanded ISIS during the offensive and Abu Jaafar was deputy commander. HRW argues that the actions, which were carefully planned and	



		systematically executed, amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity.	
11 Oct 2013		HRW, Dispatches: Executions Don't Make Iraq Safe. Erin Evers <a href="#">reports</a> that Iraqi officials have executed 42 people on 9-10 October and that violence is sharply escalating on all sides. Terrorist attacks in Iraq have killed over 4950 people in Iraq in 2013 so far and the latest suicide attack targeted a playground, killing 11 children.	
17 Oct 2013		ICG, Anything But Politics: The State of Syria's Political Opposition, <a href="#">report</a> 146. It presents ISIS as the 'most infamous' Jihadi group in Syria which 'has generated strong criticism from activists for its authoritarian tactics, public executions, ideological extremism and vicious sectarianism, and has been accused of firing on peaceful demonstrators, bombing a rival faction's headquarters and detaining activists for offences ranging from non-violent dissent to smoking cigarettes during Ramadan'. The ICG conducted interviews with Syrian activists who had been abducted by ISIS and emphasises how strong ISIS' hold of Raqqa has become. It reports that ISIS has become 'the most powerful group in northern and eastern Syria and was benefiting from control of oil fields it had wrested from Jabhat al-Nusra when it split from the group in April 2013'.	
21 Oct 2013			EU ministers urge cutting support to extremists in Syria, <i>The Wall Street Journal</i> , Naftali Bendavid. On moderate Syrian opposition groups, UK foreign minister, William Hague has stated, "we will work with them towards a legitimate peace process and give them some additional support and make it clear what we expect", urging the groups to participate

			actively in the upcoming peace talks. (Document WSJO000020131021e9al00669)
22 Oct 2013			Syrian Islamist rebel group 'helping President Assad' more than it hinders him, diplomats warn, <i>The Independent</i> , Adam Withnall. UK foreign secretary, William Hague has urged all elements of the Syrian opposition to join the upcoming peace talks. "The longer this conflict goes on the more sectarian it becomes and the more extremists are able to take hold and that is why we are making this renewed effort to get a Geneva peace process going." (DocumentINDOP00020140216e9am001rp)
23 Oct 2013		Hanged and beaten, but Syrian activist lived to tell the tale, <i>The Times</i> , Alexander Christie-Miller. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> shows IS is governing parts of northern Syria and is using torture.	
26 Oct 2013		Al-Qaeda strives to build Islamic state in northern Syria, <i>The Times</i> , Alexander Christie-Miller. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> IS holds territory and can fund itself via oil fields. <b>Quote:</b> "Although ISIS is not the largest of Syria's rebel battalions, it is well funded, controlling oil fields in Syria's Raqqa province, and draws heavily on foreign fighters with fearsome military experience, some 5,000 to 8,000 of whom are believed to have entered Syria."	
27 Oct 2013		11 bomb explosions across Iraq 'leave 49 dead', <i>Telegraph</i> , <b>Knowledge claim:</b> It claims that many of the Sunni population in Iraq support ISIS, <b>Quote:</b> Insurgents have exploited growing anger among Iraq's Sunni minority, which complains it has been	

		marginalised under the Shi'ite-led government that came to power following the US-led invasion in 2003.	
28 Oct 2013		<p>Global fund for community engagement against terrorism, RUSI. This <a href="#">commentary</a> explains the importance and function of a newly established global fund to counter terrorism on the local level.</p> <p><b>Knowledge claim:</b> Al-Qaeda's resilience and resurgence is not down to its organisational capabilities but its ideology. Local initiatives have a better positioning to influence counter terrorism narratives. <b>Quote:</b> "The future success of counter-terrorism lies in well-directed, arms-length government support for local initiatives that steer people away from the use of violence." and "A focus on the narrative at the local level in communities that are vulnerable to the terrorist message will also have the benefit of putting the terrorist threat in better perspective by ensuring that the resources devoted to it are proportionate to its true size."</p>	
29 Oct 2013		<p>HRW, Letter to President Obama regarding the visit of Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki. <a href="#">HRW</a> argues that 'Iraq does face serious security threats, but the government's failure to make urgently needed reforms and hold officials accountable for terrible abuses like torture has made Iraq less safe, not more. In fact, the government's heavy-handed approach is contributing to greater instability and exacerbating sectarian tensions'. HRW further describes these tensions due to Maliki's failed policies as follows: 'The escalation in executions after trials in which people are convicted on the basis of coerced confessions and secret evidence—for the most part in the name of counterterrorism—have done nothing to address the crisis. On the contrary, numerous Iraqis, Shia and Sunni, have told Human Rights Watch that authorities' failure to hold perpetrators accountable regardless of their sect has polarized Iraq's population, particularly in Sunni areas where people see the government's failure to hold Shia-dominated security forces</p>	

		accountable as confirmation that policies remain rooted in sectarianism.’	
30 Oct 2013		HRW, Syria: What Chance to Stop the Slaughter? HRW <a href="#">argues</a> that ‘more Syrians will be drawn to the brutality of the Islamic extremists who are in ascendancy among the rebels’ should all conflict parties continue to commit atrocities.	
30 Oct 2013		Al-Qaeda recruits entering Syria from Turkey safehouses, <i>Telegraph</i> , <b>Quote</b> : “Perhaps 10,000 foreign fighters may now be in Syria.”	
Oct 2013		ICG Crisis Watch, <a href="#">reporting</a> that ISIS fought rebel groups on 2 October in Azaz and lost the Yaaroubiyeh border crossing to a Kurdish militia on 27 October. But it overall continued its expansion in northern and eastern Syria. On Iraq, the ICG reports that October was the deadliest month since April 2008 with more than 900 people killed. Terrorist attacks led, among others, to ‘some 35 killed in 10 car explosions in predominantly Shia areas in Baghdad 27 Oct; at least 19 police and 3 civilians killed 22-23 Oct in series of bomb attacks in Anbar; 13 children killed 6 Oct in attack on school in Qabak; string of car and roadside bombings 14 Oct killed at least 44.’	
1 Nov 2013		Iraq seeks US arms as Obama is blamed for fresh onslaught, <i>The Times</i> , Catherine Philp, <b>Knowledge claim</b> : Maliki wants more weapons specifically to fight ISIS.	
15 Nov 2013		HRW, Iraq: Harsh Tactics in Advance of Holy Month. <a href="#">HRW</a> argues that the surge in terrorist attacks across Iraq should be deterred with investigations and preventive measures, and not by harassing the Sunni population, e.g. through indiscriminate arrests. The latter would further alienate the Sunni population and spark anger among them which could fuel rather than prevent future attacks by Sunni insurgents. HRW also reports that a suicide bomber targeted another group of Shia worshippers on 13 November, killing eight. HRW highlights that violence by Sunni insurgents against Shia	

		worshippers on holy days is not a new phenomenon and that similar attacks happened on Ashura in 2012, killing 62, or in 2004, killing 180 Shia pilgrims. Yet, in comparison to previous years, insurgent attacks against predominantly Shia targets escalated drastically after Iraqi security forces had attacked a protest camp in Hawija in April 2013.	
19 Nov 2013		HRW, Syria: Opposition Abuses During Ground Offensive. <a href="#">HRW</a> documents unlawful killings of civilians during a joint offensive against regime forces by ISIS and five other groups in the Christian village of Sadad, northeast of Damascus, from 21 to 28 October 2013. The insurgents had entered the village claiming not to harm civilians but executed many and used others as a human shield.	
21 Nov 2013		British family says son has died fighting for Syria jihadists, <i>The Guardian</i> , Shiv Malik and Haroon Siddique, <b>Quote:</b> “At least 200 UK-linked fighters are believed to be in Syria”	
21 Nov 2013		Britain next to feel the might of struggle, say ex-pat Jihadis, <i>The Times</i> , Sean O'Neill, <b>Knowledge claim:</b> the article claims that the UK fears terror attacks of returnees.	
21 Nov 2013			Four Britons die fighting for Al-Qaeda in Syria war, <i>The Times</i> , Duncan Gardham and John Simpson. The UK foreign secretary, William Hague, has announced that the government is planning to send £1 million of equipment to Syrian opposition groups not linked to “extremist activities”. (DocumentTIMEUK0020140215e9bl003zu)
22 Nov 2013	11 Western-backed rebel groups form one opposition group		

	called the Islamic Front (which excludes ISIS)		
29 Nov 2013		HRW, Iraq: Wave of Journalist Killings. <a href="#">HRW</a> reports that four journalists have been killed in Mosul since October 2013 and it refers to the strong ISIS presence in Mosul. According to interviews with Mosul residents, ‘the central government’s policies of conducting mass arrests and unlawful detentions in the area have ostracized the population’. A local journalist told HRW: ‘Mosul has two governments ... By day, it’s the local government, but at night, it’s al-Qaeda.’ Another observed: ‘Mosul’s journalists are caught between two fires ... If they are not targeted by terrorists, they’re targeted by the government, which considers all Mosul residents terrorists.’	
Nov 2013		ICG Crisis Watch, <a href="#">says</a> that Syrian rebels are divided over the brutality and growing power of ISIS. Seven Islamist rebel groups merged into the “Islamic Front” on 22 November to counter ISIS’ influence. It also reports that Kurdish militias continued their campaign against ISIS and Jabhat al-Nusra in northeastern Syria and managed to gain control over 19 towns and villages. On Iraq, the ICG reports that at least 169 people were killed in a series of bombings and executions between 20 and 29 November. On 25 November, France offered weapons and counter-terrorism training.	
3 Dec 2013		The Syrian civil war is breeding a new generation of terrorist; Scotland Yard is right to be worried about British jihadists bringing the war home, <i>Telegraph</i> , by Con Coughlin. <b>Quote:</b> “Scotland Yard warned yesterday that London was facing a “disturbing” new threat, with jihadists as young as 16 travelling to take up arms in the Syrian conflict. Richard Walton, the head of counter-terrorism command, warned there were signs of returnees being ordered by militants associated with al-Qaeda to carry out attacks in Britain.”	

12 Dec 2013		Syrian war revitalises al-Qaeda in Iraq, <i>The Times</i> , Anthony Loyd. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Short good summary of IS. <b>Quote:</b> “Currently, al-Qaeda's suicide attacks in Iraq occur at a rate of 30 a month. The prospect of Western recruits forming similar attack cells in their own countries is haunting intelligence agencies across Europe.”	
12 Dec 2013		Iraq is still bleeding ten years after Saddam Hussein's capture, <i>Telegraph</i> , <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Iraqi army is in a poor state. <b>Quote:</b> “much of the million-man army remains poorly equipped, badly-trained and indisciplined.”	
19 Dec 2013		Syria: Islamist rebels abusing civilian, Peter Beaumont, <i>Guardian</i> , <b>Knowledge claim:</b> IS is said to govern in Syria with a very brutal regime.	
19 Dec 2013		Amnesty International <a href="#">documents</a> serious human rights abuses in ISIS-run detention facilities in northern Syria, including in and around Raqqa, Aleppo and Idlib province. It also sheds light on the rules ISIS has established in the areas it controls, including flogging and summary executions. Based on ten interviews conducted with former detainees who had been held by ISIS between May and November 2013, Amnesty International argues that most abuses, such as abductions, arbitrary detention and torture, amount to war crimes. It reports that children have also been held in ISIS prisons. The former detainees have reportedly ‘asked that the world should wake up to the plight of those now suffering under ISIS in northern Syria’. Amnesty International argues that ISIS’ power has grown significantly since April 2013. It sheds light on how ISIS consolidated its influence in Raqqa and beyond since the spring of 2013.	
23 Dec 2013		HRW, He Won’t Be Home for the Holidays. Emma Daly <a href="#">reports</a> about the abduction of Spanish journalists Javier Espinosa and Ricardo Garcia Vilanova by ISIS. Both have been held since September 2013, with ISIS refusing to negotiate their release. At least 30 journalists are reported missing in Syria, making it ‘the most	

		dangerous country in the world for the media'. Daly highlights that it is 'hard to keep track of numbers, since many outlets and families choose to keep quiet about the missing in the hope of negotiating a return'. The FSA's Supreme Military Council has said 'that most people going after the journalists were outside their control'. Daly concludes that 'the world cannot learn about the horrors in Syria ... when journalists can't do their jobs'.	
26 Dec 2013		HRW, New Weapons Won't Address Iraq's Deeper Problems. Erin Evers <a href="#">argues</a> that new U.S. weapon deliveries won't address Iraq's challenges, namely the fight against ISIS. These measures are 'missing the point' as there is 'little evidence that Iraq's failure to improve security in the country stems from a lack of weapons, but rather from its short-sighted approach to corruption and sectarian politics, and a counterterrorism strategy that targets Sunni Iraqis amounting to collective punishment.' She further highlights how corrupt the Iraqi security forces are, how this has facilitated prison breaks by ISIS and how aptly the latter exploits Shia-Sunni tensions.	
27 Dec 2013		US sends missiles and drones to help Baghdad, Michael Evans, <i>Times</i> , <b>Knowledge claim:</b> US reacts to IS threat to Maliki gov. More than 8,000 Iraqis have been killed this year by IS.	
28 Dec 2013		Five killed in gunfight during raid on home of Iraqi MP, <i>Telegraph</i> , Richard Spencer. <b>Quote:</b> "A strengthening of al-Qaeda forces in Sunni areas of Iraq [...] has coincided with a growing sense of local alienation from Mr Maliki's ruling Shia alliance."	
Dec 2013		ICG Crisis Watch, <a href="#">reports</a> that increasingly powerful Jihadi groups have marginalised Western-backed rebel groups in Syria. On 5 December, ISIS abducted more than 50 Kurdish civilians from Jarabulus and Manbij near Aleppo. The month of December saw significant clashes between ISIS and the Ahrar al-Sham Islamist coalition. ISIS reportedly beheaded at least three Alawites in Adra, near Damascus, during a joint offensive with Jabhat al-Nusra and the Islamic Front. On Iraq, the ICG reports that daily violence	



		continued with over 700 killed in December. Attacks continued to target Iraqi security forces (e.g. on 21 December when 18 were killed in an ambush) and Shia neighbourhoods (e.g. a series of bombings in Baghdad on 30-31 December which killed 23). The Iraqi government closed its border with Syria on 25 December prior to the launch of an operation to counter ISIS in its western Anbar province. The ICG reports that 44 Iraqi members of parliament resigned on 30 December over the demolishing of Sunni protest camps and arrest of al-Alwani. According to UN reports, 2013 became the deadliest year since 2008 with at least 7818 civilians killed.	
2 January 2014	ISIS uses the explosion of violence between Sunni tribes and security forces in Anbar's cities and the brief withdrawal of the Iraqi army to surge into Fallujah and Ramadi from the Western desert. It <a href="#">seizes control of several police stations in Fallujah and Ramadi</a> the next day.		
03 Jan 2014		HRW, Iraq: Investigate Violence at Protest Camp. <a href="#">HRW</a> calls for an investigation of violence in Anbar province during the demolishing of Sunni protest camps and the arrest of al-Alwani on 30 December. HRW argues that 'government statements before the clashes and the deployment of the army seemed intended more to provoke violence than prevent it'. HRW also highlights that this was not at all an unexpected development as Iraqi authorities 'had repeatedly	

		threatened to remove the protesters in Ramadi and other largely Sunni areas'. On 23 December, the commander of Iraq's Counterterrorism Service had reportedly referred to government operations against ISIS in Anbar on his Facebook page with "I swear to God I will kill those dogs and those who are with them. I will wipe them out." The Iraqi state news agency had also reported two days before the incident that 30 armoured vehicles had been deployed outside of the protest camp in Ramadi which has existed for about a year.	
6 Jan 2014		Al-Qaida uses weak Iraq-Syria border in fight, <i>The Guardian</i> . <b>Knowledge claim:</b> In the first week of January, ISIS took over northern Iraqi cities Ramadi and Fallujah. The army is about to go in. The article informs that ISIS fighters from Syria join their friends in Iraq. At that point, ISIS is said to have been in control of territories in Iraq and Syria.	
7 Jan 2014		Al-Qaeda's spectre spreads to Iraq, <i>Financial Times</i> , <b>Quote 1:</b> "Mr Maliki faces a widespread Sunni rebellion that is allowing al-Qaeda's affiliates to exploit the inter-sectarian turmoil." <b>Quote 2:</b> "For the past three years, <u>many experts have warned</u> that the Syrian conflict would spread into a wider regional war that engulfs neighbouring Iraq and Lebanon. Those fears are now being realised"	
7 Jan 2014		Will things break apart in 2014? Security <a href="#">predictions</a> ahead, <i>RUSI</i> . <b>Quote: On Al-Qaeda affiliates:</b> "2014 will show that the movement is still capable of radicalising and training many people." On Iraq: "It is hard not to see Iraq spiral into further chaos in 2014." On Syria: "2014 will see Bashar al-Assad remain the biggest – but not the only – warlord in Syria. Weakened by the conflict he still has more cards up his sleeve than his opponents. Ethnic cleansing will continue in large swaths of the country. Rebel groups will continue to fight among themselves for territory. Extremists now hold the upper hand on both sides."	

9 Jan 2014		HRW, Iraq: Protect Anbar Residents From Abuses. Based on witness statements, <a href="#">HRW</a> describes the situation in Fallujah and Ramadi in detail. It reports how Anbar's residents are trapped in a three-front war and exposed to 'unlawful methods of fighting by all sides'. Based on witness statements, HRW reports that ISIS entered Fallujah and Ramadi on 1 January. 'In Fallujah, witnesses said, they went to each of the city's five police stations, where they released prisoners and took weapons from police, who immediately surrendered. The fighters set the police stations and city government building on fire. The fighters then headed to Fallujah's main checkpoint in the eastern part of the city, manned by the army and local police, and based themselves in an industrial area close to the checkpoint. When SWAT and army forces returned to Anbar, they surrounded Ramadi and Fallujah. They controlled entry and exit points, and prevented fuel and food from being taken into the cities, but allowed several hundred people to flee areas of heavy fighting.'	
13 Jan 2014		HRW Syria: Extremists Restricting Women's Rights. Based on interviews with Syrian refugees in Kurdistan and Turkey, <a href="#">HRW</a> reports how ISIS is violating women's rights in areas under their control in northern and northeastern Syria.	
13 Jan 2014			Syrian women demand voice, representative at UN-brokered peace talks, <i>The Canadian Press</i> , John Heilprin. Foreign secretary, William Hague, has informed the UK Parliament that the government will be giving £200,000 to aid the formation of a consultative body in the UN n the role of Syrian women's groups and civil society. (Document CPR0000020140114ea1d00038)

13 Jan 2014			<p>'You need to go to Geneva', <i>The Independent</i>, Kim Sengupta. UK foreign secretary, William Hague, asserts that a diplomatic solution is the only way forward in resolving the Syrian civil war. A senior member of the Syrian opposition claims that the UK and US are threatening to withdraw their support of the rebels unless they participate in the Geneva peace talks.</p> <p>(Document INDOP00020140114ea1d0009p)</p>
15 Jan 2014		Western agencies visit Damascus to re-engage with Assad, <i>Telegraph</i> , By Richard Spence, <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Western intelligence meets Assad to talk about ISIS foreign fighters and how to curtail the problem	
17 Jan 2014		The costs of clandestine talks with Syria's strongman, FT, Roula Khalaf. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Syrian war is increasingly analysed with a CT lens (still only in terms of Jihadi returnees).	
17 Jan 2014			<p>The West may pay for its inaction in Syria, <i>The Daily Star</i>, Michael Glackin. The UK government has revoked the passports of 20 people this year in an attempt to combat the threat posed by returning jihadist fighters from Syria.</p> <p>(Document DSTAR00020140116ea1h00005)</p>
19 Jan 2014		Al-Qaeda: on the march, <i>FT</i> , By Sam Jones, Borzou Daragahi and Simeon Kerr. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Good analysis of AQ strength	

		globally. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> AQ (and ISIS) are more locally oriented with the goal in Syria/Iraq to establish a caliphate	
19 Jan 2014		Al-Qaeda training British and European 'jihadists' in Syria to set up terror cells at home, <i>Telegraph</i> , <b>Knowledge claim:</b> several gov officials warn about the danger of ISIS volunteers who return to UK.	
20 Jan 2014		Lonely-hearts blog for al-Qaeda fighters, <i>Times</i> , Duncan Gardham. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> women go to Syria to join ISIS. Another step in ISIS goal of establishing a state.	
20 Jan 2014		Syria's Assad accused of boosting Al-Qaeda with secret oil deals; Western intelligence suggests Bashar al-Assad collaborating with jihadists to persuade West the uprising is terrorist-led, <i>Telegraph</i> , Ruth Sherlock. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> possibly true that Assad and ISIS have a sort of truce in the war.	
21 Jan 2014		In its annual report, <a href="#">HRW</a> discusses how sectarian tensions have deepened in Iraq, with ISIS carrying out 'nearly daily attacks against civilians, making 2013 the bloodiest of the last five years'. It accuses the Iraqi government of responding to 'largely peaceful demonstrations with violence and to worsening security with draconian counterterrorism measures'.	
31 Jan 2014		Eyes wide shut as the danger grew, <i>Times</i> , Anthony Loyd. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Turkey known to have facilitated foreign fighters join ISIS.	
31 Jan 2014		Jihadists flock to Turkish camps to plan new atrocities in Europe, <i>Times</i> , Catherine Philp. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Turkey has camps where fighters train to perpetrate terrorist attacks	
31 Jan 2014			700 Britons fighting in Syria terror groups, warns Hollande, <i>The Telegraph</i> , Tom Whitehead. Prime Minister David Cameron has announced that the British government has agreed together with the Frence to tackle the

			security threat posed by UK and French nationals returning from Syria. UK foreign Secretary, William Hague, “warned that the radicalisation o British nationals who leave to fight in Syria was a danger to national security”. (DocumentTELUK00020140201ea1v000xm)
Jan 2014	After serious fighting, ISIS claims to have complete control over Raqqa, and – in a symbolic move – names it the capital of its caliphate.		
Jan 2014		ICG, CrisisWatch Iraq and Syria. The <a href="#">ICG</a> reports that more than 100.000 Iraqi civilians were displaced during the month due to the fighting in Anbar province. According to UNHCR reports, 65.000 fled fighting in Fallujah and Ramadi during the week of 18-24 January alone. ICG claims that after local groups reportedly regained control of Fallujah, the government no longer distinguished between residents and militias, announced Fallujah to be in the hands of ISIS and called for national and international support to fight ISIS. On Syria, ICG reports that clashes between ISIS and other rebel groups intensified after 1 January, when the Islamic Front accused ISIS of killing a rebel commander and ‘being worse than the Assad regime’. While ISIS lost control of its bases in Idlib and west of Aleppo, it consolidated its presence east of Aleppo and in Raqqa province.	
3 Feb 2014		Iraq on the edge of the abyss, <i>RUSI</i> , <a href="#">commentary</a> by Gareth Stansfield. The article explains the role of PM Nouri al-Maliki, Kurdish leadership and Sunni insurgency in Iraq and their	

		interlinked impact on the precarious situation in Iraq. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Maliki's coalition is highly likely to win the election in April which will result in continued insurgency in Anbar and increasing opposition in Sunni Arab territories. If Maliki presents as weak, the situation in Iraq could very quickly deteriorate, putting the country's integrity at risk. <b>Quote:</b> "It would be a mistake to view the ISIS presence in the Sunni-dominant areas of Iraq as being transitory. Buoyed by successes in Syria and the resources that are being made available to them from Sunni Arab states of the region, ISIS is a different entity to the previous iteration of Al-Qa'ida in Iraq – the Islamic State of Iraq – as it has a degree of local and regional legitimacy that ISI never enjoyed. Hence, for as long as the situation continues in Syria, and the status quo remains in Iraq, ISIS is set to increase its capabilities, influence, and successes."	
4 Feb 2014		Analysis, Middle East turmoil brings risks as well as opportunities for al-Qaida, <i>Guardian</i> , Jason Burke. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> AQ and IS split, seems close to how it was: IS was not agreeing with AQ's "instructions"	
4 Feb 2014		British fighter killed in Syria; A British fundamentalist has been killed fighting for a jihadist group in Syria, <i>Telegraph</i> , Ruth Sherlock. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> GB foreign fighter, approx 600 British nationals are said to be in Syria	
5 February 2014		HRW, Iraq: Execution of SWAT Forces Furthers Crimes Against Humanity According to <a href="#">HRW</a> , ISIS claimed responsibility for the execution of four Iraqi SWAT members near Ramadi. It also reports how SWAT forces reportedly ousted ISIS from one of Ramadi's neighbourhoods on 30 January but how fighting was continuing in other parts of Ramadi and how 'accounts of fighting in and around Fallujah have been inconsistent'.	
6 Feb 2014		Rush-hour suicide bombers kill 25 in Baghdad, <i>Times</i> , Catherine Philp. <b>Relevance:</b> More car bombs in Iraq.	

6 Feb 2014		<p>A citizen journalist, writing under a pen name, describes the effect of a barrel-bomb in northern Syria, <i>Chatham House</i>. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> The article provides the perspective of Syrian civilians living through the civil war and the rule of ISIS. <b>Quote:</b> “One of the major changes is that Al-Qaeda (as represented by the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham, ISIS) is now in many more places.” They are “feared because they have chosen to ‘rule’ many of the towns and villages that the Free Syrian Army has liberated. And by ‘rule’ I mean it in the same horrible way Assad ruled. Many people think that ISIS is a tool of the Assad regime. The same brutal tactics but with different clothing.” On the Geneva peace talks, the journalist remarks that “They might as well be conducted on Mars between a Canadian and a Japanese. It means nothing to anyone in Syria. To think Assad will negotiate his own departure is ludicrous.”</p>	
6 Feb 2014		<p>Open <a href="#">letter</a> signed by humanitarian, human rights and peace groups to the UN Security Council appealing for a Resolution on aid for starving Syrians, published by <i>Chatham House</i>. <b>Quote:</b> “After more than a year under siege, people in these areas are running out of food and medicine. Children and women are facing acute malnutrition and, in some cases, starving to death because food and medical aid has been prevented from coming in and people from getting out.”</p>	
9 Feb 2014		<p>Islamic preachers: the pied pipers of sexual apartheid? British universities are the new base for a breed of hard-line doctrine intent on the segregation of young men and women, <i>Telegraph</i>, Joe Shute. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> worried re Muslim extremist lines at UK universities.</p>	
10 Feb 2014		<p>Jihadists using aid agencies as cover to Join Syria fight, <i>Times</i>, Anthony Loyd. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> This info came from UK</p>	



		intelligence, which was based near TK border to monitor flow of foreign fighters.	
10 Feb 2014		British Muslims 'carried out torture' in Syria, <i>Telegraph</i> , David Blair. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Worry that foreign fighters might come back to UK.	
12 Feb 2014		A gathering force; Syria, <i>FT</i> , By Borzou Daragahi. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> FT sees Jabhat al-Nusra as the most effective and dangerous groups battling the Assad regime. Quoting an expert: "Of all the groups on the hardline end of the rebellion, Jabhat al-Nusra has played the most pragmatic political game," says Charles Lister, a Syria specialist at the Brookings Doha Centre. "That's contributed to the situation where they're an al-Qaeda group but also among rebel groups and among some sections of the political opposition. Most rebel groups on the ground either support or accept Jabhat al-Nusra's role in the fight." Whereas ISIS is unpopular among rebel factions, quote: "Isis is considered to be so extreme that even al-Qaeda leader Ayman Zawahiri disavowed it."	
13 Feb 2014		Bomber was radicalised in Britain, John Simpson, Tom Coghlan, <i>The Times</i> . <b>Knowledge claim:</b> a British national who joined ISIS carried out a suicide attack in Syria	
17 Feb 2014		British jihadist warns life is hard in Syria and hundreds return to UK, <i>Telegraph</i> , David Blair. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> claim that Assad and ISIS have a sort of tacit agreement. <b>Quote:</b> "Mr Assad has released hundreds of radical jihadists from Syria's jails, with several of them going on to assume leading positions in both of these movements. The Syrian air force has concentrated its raids on the moderate opposition, giving al-Qaeda's allies a degree of immunity from attack. In addition, the extremists have been able to export oil from areas they control using transit routes across regime-held territory."	

17 Feb 2014		Jihadist groupies flocking to Syria with marriage in mind, <i>The Times</i> , Tom Coghlan. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Social reasons for foreign fighters to join, particular focus on GB jihadists	
19 February 2014		US diplomats in secret talks to arm Syrian rebel fighters, <i>The Times</i> , Tom Coghlan, Michael Evans. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Intelligence agencies around the world are increasingly concerned about the jihadi threat that is posed by Syrian rebel forces.	
22 February 2014		Syria fighters pour scorn on 'Jihad tourists', <i>The Times</i> , Tom Coghlan. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> GB especially worried re returnees. <b>Quote:</b> "Britain's intelligence services remain concerned by the numbers travelling to Syria, even those who go briefly, because of the training, extremist teaching and contacts that they could acquire, even in a short space of time."	
23 February 2014		Al-Qaeda's top envoy in Syria is killed by suicide bomb; by Richard Spencer, <i>Telegraph</i> . <b>Knowledge claim:</b> fighting is mentioned between ISIS and other rebel forces. <b>Quote:</b> the fight against ISIS has been only partially successful, and it retains its strongholds in Raqqa province and towns north-east of Aleppo. It is also fighting back against the groups that have taken it on and against civilians in areas they hold.	
26 February 2014		Thousands of starving Syrians scramble for first food in seven months, Catherine Philp, <i>The Times</i> . <b>Knowledge claim:</b> quick summary of fighting between ISIS and other rebels, and mentioning that rebels fighting ISIS has allowed Assad to retake territory.	
28 February 2014		Motorbike blast kills 52 in Iraq; Dozens die in Iraq as violence escalates, <i>Telegraph</i> . <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Iraq falling slowly into civil war. <b>Quote:</b> "The latest bloodshed comes as Prime Minister Nouri Maliki wages a war against Sunni militants in western Anbar province neighbouring Syria, and has become a base for ISIL. Despite the offensive, the pace of attacks around the country goes on undiminished."	

28 February 2014		Syria's most hardline jihadist outfit retreats from parts of north, <i>Telegraph</i> . <b>Interesting quote:</b> "It looks like ISIS has made the strategic decision to reinforce existing strongholds in eastern Aleppo, all of which lie on valuable routes towards the jewel in ISIS's crown, the city of Raqa," said Charles Lister, a visiting fellow at the Brookings Doha Center.	
28 February 2014		Rebels oust jihadi group Isis from Azaz in northern Syria, <i>FT</i> , by Borzou Daragahi. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> some successes of rebel forces in Syria against ISIS.	
Feb 2014	AQ-central breaks ties with ISIS entirely. ISIS claims they represent the spirit of AQ under OBL, not under its new leader Zawahiri.		
3 March 2014		Pay taxes in gold or die, Christians in Syria told, <i>The Times</i> , Catherine Philp. Knowledge claim: ISIS has a harsh rule in Raqqa, based on strict Islamic interpretation.	
10 March 2014		HRW, Iraq: UPR Submission March 2014. <a href="#">HRW</a> reports about human rights abuses by Iraqi security forces, especially against prisoners and in retaliation for ISIS's "Breaking the Walls" campaign. HRW claims that 'as many as 1000 prisoners escaped' during the Abu Ghraib and Taji prison breaks in July 2013. HRW further reports that severe fighting is ongoing in Anbar which has caused a humanitarian crisis and prevented the delivery of humanitarian aid to residents of Fallujah and Ramadi and to internally displaced persons.	
14 March 2014		Syria conflict anniversary: who controls what, <i>Telegraph</i> , Josie Ensor. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> good overview of war situation in Syria. <b>Quote:</b> The conflict has become more complicated than a battle between two warring groups, with moderate rebels and Islamist	

		opposition groups fighting amongst themselves for control of certain areas.	
21 March 2014		British Jihadists still heading to Syria despite police threats, <i>Times</i> , Tom Coghlan. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> GB worried re British Muslims joining ISIS, despite gov threat that they face serious consequence if they go. <b>Quote:</b> More than 400 British Muslims are believed to have travelled to fight in Syria, with most choosing to join more than 5,000 foreign jihadists estimated to have joined ISIS.	
21 March 2014		British jihadist in Syria encourages others to join war in recruitment video, <i>Telegraph</i> , Josie Ensor. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS propaganda apparatus mentioned. <b>Quote:</b> Many of the foreign fighters are active on social media, with some even holding live webchats with people looking to make the journey.	
29 March 2014		Syria: the jihadi town where 'brides' are snatched from schools, <i>Telegraph</i> , Richard Spencer Aazaz. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> the article mentions the prospect of marrying a women as incentive for foreign fighters to join ISIS. Role of women-jihad. Also a description of ISIS governing a city, and using terror, torture, cruelty. <b>Quote:</b> "What is perhaps most remarkable is that despite the brutality, many residents of north-west Syria still back ISIS. [...] An explanation is that by demanding control of all aspects of its subjects' lives, ISIS did at least manage to impose some sort of order on a Syria that is becoming more lawless as the war progresses."	
30 March 2014		Syria: Inside an Al Qaeda prison, <i>Telegraph</i> , Video and report by Will Wintercross. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS cruel governing mentioned.	
31 March 2014		Islamist militants hold 40 western hostages in Syria, <i>Guardian</i> , Martin Chulov Beirut. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Taking hostages as part of ISIS of terror-regime. <b>Quote:</b> "Hostage-taking became a tool to impose both fear and influence. Prisoners were also seized to trade them for Islamist prisoners held in Syria and elsewhere."	

31 March 2014		Thick as thieves: European criminals take to Syria's battlefield, <i>RUSI</i> , <a href="#">commentary</a> by Raffaello Pantucci. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> There seems to be high proportion of European jihadists fighting in Syria who have a criminal past. <b>Quote:</b> "This is an aspect of particular concern to security services since it gives them access to criminal networks for whom weapons are easier to obtain, helping them climb over a crucial hurdle when putting together a terrorist plot."	
10 April 2014		Syria is now the gravest terrorist threat to Britain, <i>Telegraph</i> , By Con Coughlin. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Syria has been elevated as number 1 terrorist threat. <b>Article quotes May:</b> "Theresa May, the Home Secretary, published her annual report on the Government's strategy for countering terrorism. 'The growing threat from terrorist groups in Syria,' she said, had been the most significant development in the fight against terrorism in the past year.'"	
12 April 2014		War is inescapable backdrop to Iraqi poll, <i>Guardian</i> , Martin Chulov Baghdad. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> mentions how IS' gain of Anbar province influences the elections.	
14 April 2014		Iraq elections overshadowed by claims of corruption, <i>FT</i> , Borzou Daragahi in Cairo. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> A description of Iraq's government corruption, and elitism (only the ones already in the political system really can get elected). <b>Quote:</b> "So the competition in this election is only between the political parties that are already controlling the state."	
15 April 2014		Iraq closes Abu Ghraib prison, <i>Times</i> , Hugh Tomlinson. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> The closing of the prison is "a tacit admission by the Iraqi Government that it can no longer keep the facility secure from a rising terrorist threat that has dragged the country back to the brink of civil war."	
20 April 2014		French journalists back home after kidnappers free them in Syria, <i>FT</i> , Adam Thomson. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS keeps using kidnappings to inflict fear. <b>Quote:</b> "Syria has become the most	

		dangerous conflict zone in the world for journalists, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists. The New York-based organisation said this month that 61 journalists had been abducted in the country in 2013. More than 60 journalists have been killed in the country since the conflict began.”	
21 April 2014		British extremist in Syria says 'this is no five-star Jihad', <i>Telegraph</i> , Josie Ensor. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Realising the importance of social media for ISIS recruitment.	
24 April 2014		Foreign fighters: Portsmouth Muslims work with police to deter their youth from Syria's deadly lure: Up to 10 embark in secret from city in six months Parents get guidance to spot children's intentions, <i>Guardian</i> , Sandra Laville. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> first direction towards de-radicalisation programmes and PREVENT in the UK.	
24 April 2014		Assad infiltrates Jihadist ranks to divide and rule, <i>Times</i> , Laura Pitel. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> experts claim that the Assad regime and ISIS have some sort of collaboration (Assad is not targeting ISIS, some senior members of ISIS have links to Syrian intel).	
25 April 2014		Terrorism in the UK: Social media is now the biggest jihadi training camp of them all, <i>Telegraph</i> , Fraser Nelson. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Well-written article about how powerless UK authorities are faced with “cyber-jihad” (online recruitment), how difficult it is to detect radicalisation early enough. Also interesting that it reports the UK is most affected by this cyber-jihad and the issue of foreign fighters.	
26 April 2014		FSA strikes Jihadist-held stronghold, <i>Times</i> , Laura Pitel. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Article mentions “silent protest” of people living under ISIS by producing leaflets that explain how horrible life is under ISIS. But these have all been arrested, saying therefore that “life under Isis was worse than under the Assad regime.”	
26 April 2014		Syria's bloodshed spills into Iraq as al-Qaeda bombs Shia militant rally, <i>Telegraph</i> , Colin Freeman. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS in Iraq attacks a Shia group that allegedly sent members to fight alongside Assad. There now is a clear Syria connection in the Iraqi civil war.	

28 April 2014		Syria Iraqi air strike kills eight in 'jihadist convoy', <i>Guardian</i> . <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Iraq strikes in Syria against ISIS – the war has definitely become intertwined between the two countries.	
28 April 2014		Syria's jihadist groups fight for control of eastern oilfields, <i>FT</i> , Erika Solomon. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS is fighting a fierce battle to keep control of the oil fields in the East (Deir Ezzor province). Knowledge claim: ISIS main funding mechanism is oil, particularly attractive as it is a more reliable and steady income.	
28 April 2014		ICG, Iraq: Falluja's Faustian Bargain, <a href="#">report</a> no 150. ICG argues that ISIS's rise is a symptom, not the cause, of poor governance in Iraq which is driving instability. ICG claims that by mismanaging the crisis, the Iraqi government gave Fallujah residents little choice but to form an alliance of convenience with ISIS. The army's siege of Fallujah allowed ISIS to renew its support base in Iraq: 'with a high profile from the fighting in Syria and superior weaponry, they once again have become a magnet for the country's disaffected'. ICG also suggests that by initially exaggerating the threat to Fallujah, exacerbating tensions and allowing the crisis to escalate, Maliki rescued his chances in the 30 April parliamentary elections.	
29 April 2014		Iraq election: violence and sectarianism blight prospects for change, <i>FT</i> , Borzou Daragahi. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> mentions deep sectarian divide and violence in Iraq. <b>Quote:</b> Sectarian tensions between the Sunni minority and the Shia-led government have already peaked in an explosion of violence. The Sunni extremist Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, or Isis, the successor to al-Qaeda in Iraq, has made a <b>triumphant return</b> to parts of the country, especially Anbar province, threatening even the outskirts of western Baghdad.	
30 April 2014		Iraq election: violence overshadows first election since US withdrew, <i>Telegraph</i> , By Richard Spencer. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS is mentioned to control sections of Sunni-dominated western Iraq. <b>Quote:</b> "In Fallujah, scene of one of the fiercest battles of the	

		Coalition occupation of Iraq, ISIS and other Sunni rebels have forced out the government altogether.”	
30 April 2014		Iraq needs a future without Maliki, <i>FT</i> . <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Maliki’s sectarian policy and corrupt government is given as reason for ISIS’ successes. <b>Quote:</b> “Mr Maliki scraped back into power in 2010, but after the withdrawal of US troops in 2011 he purged rivals from the Sunni minority and suppressed their protests, as well as alienating the self-governing Kurds in northern Iraq. That shredded the postwar federal pact for power- and revenue-sharing, and opened the gates to a jihadi comeback in western Iraq, linking up with radical insurgents in eastern Syria to create a cross-border emirate for the al-Qaeda-influenced Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria (Isis).”	
April 2014	ISIS launches a twitter app capable of sending over 10,000 tweets a day		
1 May 2014		Syria Jihadists crucify opponents, <i>Times</i> , Deborah Haynes. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS’s cruel way of governing by setting an example and inflicting fear, also a symbolic reference to biblical times	
1 May 2014		Determined Iraqis brave bombs to vote, <i>The Times</i> , Catherine Philp. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> In the elections, Maliki presents himself as strong man who can confront ISIS terrorism (mainly to please his electorate). <b>Quote:</b> “Mr Maliki has sought to boost his popularity among Shias by aggressively confronting the Sunni insurgency.”	
1 May 2014			Counter-extremism begins at home, <i>Asharq Al-Awsat</i> . In an unprecedented move, the UK police has made an appeal to Muslim women to help dissuade



			their relatives from travelling to Syria to join the conflict. (Document ASHAL00020140502ea5100005)
3 May 2014		HRW, Iraq: Government Blocking Residents Fleeing Fighting. <a href="#">HRW</a> reports that ISIS has claimed responsibility for deadly attacks on a Shia election campaign rally and on polling centres in Iraq. On election day, suicide bombs were also launched in Tikrit and Kirkuk. HRW argues that the Iraqi government is exacerbating a humanitarian crisis in Anbar and indiscriminately targeting civilians. It reports that ISIS remains in and around Fallujah and on the outskirts of Ramadi.	
4 May 2014		Jihadist groups fight for control of Syrian towns, <i>FT</i> , Erika Solomon. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS is grabbing territories in both countries and tries to link them. <b>Quote:</b> It is now trying to link its Syrian territory to strongholds 500km away in the western desert bordering Syria, where it is challenging the Iraqi government's control of parts of Anbar province.	
7 May 2014		HRW, Fallujah Under Fire. <a href="#">HRW</a> reports that the Iraqi army has not yet entered Fallujah but on 6 May, 3500 Iraqi soldiers and 750 pro-government militia began an offensive on surrounding towns. HRW reports that journalists are blocked from entering Anbar and that it is relying on Facebook messages by residents and hospital employees.	
8 May 2014		Briton denies going to Syria for terror training: Wife of accused told him to go and die, court told Father of two 'wanted to escape filth of Britain', <i>Guardian</i> , Sandra Lavielle. <b>Interesting:</b> one of the first trials of returnees from Syria.	
9 May 2014		Britons fighting in Syria must lose passports, MPs demand, <i>Guardian</i> , Ewen MacAskill. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Foreign fighter returnees pose a threat to the UK.	
12 May 2014		Gunmen storm Iraqi military barracks, killing 20, <i>Telegraph</i> . <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Militants in Iraq launched an audacious attack in	

		the Mosul area, a former AQ stronghold. The attack on a military barracks killed 20 troops.	
16 May 2014		Syria rebels strike again with huge tunnel bomb, <i>The Times</i> , Catherine Philp. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Fighting between Islamic Front and ISIS is said to be ongoing. ISIS has withdrawn to its stronghold in Raqqa, but has been blamed for a string of car bombs across the rebel-held north.	
21 May 2014		Youth worker is first Briton to be convicted of Syria terror offence, <i>Guardian</i> , Sandra Laville. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> British national travelled towards Syria but returned once he reached Turkey. He has been convicted of a terror offence. Another interesting aspect is that the police has started working with local Muslim communities to detect radicalisation, ISIS support, and people intending to travel to Syria.	
21 May 2014		Assad turns guns on south after victory, <i>The Times</i> , Tom Coghlan. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Free Syrian Army needs to be armed, if it were to succeed against Assad. <b>Quote of a quote:</b> "It is a crucial period," said Monzer Akbik, chief spokesman for the Syrian National Council. "These missiles are very limited in number. If it gets sophisticated weapons, the Free Syrian Army will advance; if it gets nothing, the regime will advance and the war will turn back into an underground guerrilla war. But it will never stop till Assad goes."	
26 May 2014		Syria's most bloodthirsty jihadists 'are British', <i>Telegraph</i> , Deborah Haynes. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> The majority of foreign fighters in Syria is said to be from the UK. Therefore the UK parliament needs to resume discussions about the war in Syria and decide how to handle possible returnees. On the question of arming rebels, FO said this can be ruled out because of fear it could fall in Islamists' hands.	
27 May 2014		Middle East: Three nations, one conflict, <i>FT</i> , By Borzou Daragahi. <b>Interesting:</b> exceptionally good article about the war in Syria, foreign interference (who is with whom and why), and how Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon are intertwined in this war. Interesting	

		<p><b>knowledge claim</b> that the war has increasingly span over three countries, whose borders are becoming porous and are being redrawn along ethnic lines (as opposed to national lines). <b>Quote:</b> “The war generally pits three increasingly allied Shia-dominated governments in Syria, Iraq and Lebanon against Sunni rebels who appear to be learning tactics from each other and sharing resources. The governments are also taking varied levels of direction from Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's regime in Iran. Weaponry supporting the Syrian regime comes from Russia, which with China provides cover from the UN Security Council.” (not that much re ISIS, but good summary of the conflict)</p>	
27 May 2014		<p>Iraq copies Syria to drop barrel bombs on civilians, <i>The Times</i>, Hugh Tomlinson. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Iraqi government and ISIS are leading a fierce fight over Fallujah since January, when it fell to ISIS. Iraqi government is shelling Fallujah indiscriminately, and thousands of civilians are trapped inside, or have fled. <b>Quote:</b> ISIS “now controls large areas either side of the Syrian border, fighting two conflicts simultaneously, its ranks swelled by a steady influx of foreign fighters.”</p>	
27 May 2014		<p>HRW, Iraq: Government Attacking Fallujah Hospital. Drawing on reports by Fallujah residents, <a href="#">HRW</a> claims that ‘ISIS has planted improvised explosive devices along the main highway and other parts of city, and is operating prisons in Fallujah and elsewhere’. Further, ISIS has reportedly taken over parts of Fallujah’s hospital. HRW also reports that ISIS claimed responsibility for nine car bombings in Shia areas of Baghdad which killed at least 34.</p>	
May 2014	<p>ISIS launches the video “The Clanging of the Swords Part 4.” A graphic video of the execution of unarmed Iraqi soldiers, which</p>		

	became one of the most popular jihadi videos ever.		
24 May 2014	Returnee ISIS fighter Mehdi Nemmouche shoots and kills four people at the Jewish Museum in Brussels. The attack highlights that ISIS is stepping up its external operations and that foreign fighters who return from Syria to Europe pose a concrete, rather than abstract, threat		
1 June 2014		Man suspected of attack at Belgium Jewish museum charged, <i>FT</i> , Adam Thomson. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> with the attack on the Synagogue in Brussels, the threat of returnees is mounting. <b>Quote:</b> “European governments are becoming increasingly worried about the involvement of their citizens in the Syrian conflict - and the potential fallout when they return.”	
1 June 2014			The British Bin Laden, <i>The Mail on Sunday</i> , Abul Taher and Amanda Perthen. A change in UK law tightening prosecution of British jihadists committing terrorist acts overseas is set to be announced in the Queen’s Speech this week. (DocumentMOSM000020140601ea610000z)

2 June 2014		Man held over killings at Jewish museum in Brussels fought with jihadists in Syria, <i>Guardian</i> , Anne Penketh Paris. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Terrorist radicalised in prison. The article also adds further details about why the attack was not prevented. <b>Quote:</b> “On leaving Syria, he covered his tracks by flying to Malaysia and Singapore before returning to Europe, Molins said. He was noticed by German authorities in March 2014, who alerted the French counter-terrorism agency. Leeuw said Nemmouche was not known to Belgian police.”	
2 June 2014		France arrests four suspected of ties with Syrian jihadists, <i>FT</i> , Hugh Carnegy. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Fears of terrorism by Syria-returnees rise in France after the ISIS Brussels terrorist was identified as French citizen.	
3 June 2014			Top Threat to Britain is...Belgium, <i>The Sun</i> , Tom Newton Dunn. Prime Minister David Cameron has identified returning jihadis as an “incipient terrorist threat” to the UK. Intelligence chiefs have stated that it is not only British jihadis who pose a threat to the UK but all returning EU jihadis. (DocumentTHESUK0020140603ea63001up)
4 June 2014		Europe's fears of Syria blowback soar in wake of museum attack, <i>FT</i> , Sam Jones. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Now in Europe sweeps a moment of threat apprehension as over 3,000 European foreign fighters have joined ISIS. <b>Quote:</b> “Syria blowback - the term spymasters use to describe the unwanted or unintended rebound of violence from one area to another” <b>and:</b> “he Belgian killings have crystallised a Europe-wide problem of citizens travelling to wage	

		<p>jihad abroad that has been discussed for months, but is only now emerging as a threat with immediate implications.”</p>	
5 June 2014		<p>The Golan Heights: ripples of civil war in Israel’s little piece of Syria, <a href="#">Chatham House</a>, Christopher Phillips. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> The article presents the perspective of Golan residents of the civil war in Syria. <b>Quote:</b> “During the civil war’s early years, there were fights between supporters of President Bashar Al-Assad and the opposition in the village’s main square. As throughout Syria, families and communities are torn by competing loyalties...The war is getting closer, with Israel reporting that both the rebels and Assad’s Lebanese allies Hezbollah have crossed into the Golan during 2014... as ever, the last Syrians on the Golan have no choice but to wait and see what fate the powers around them will deliver. That said, after 50 years there remains a determination to keep their culture, independence and spirit alive – whichever flag they live under.”</p>	
7 June 2014		<p>Iraq university raided in day of bloodshed, <i>Telegraph</i>, By Richard Spencer. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS raided a university in Ramadi, with over 10,000 students held hostages. But ISIS left when government forces came, and nobody knows what ISIS wanted to achieve with this. (In retrospect, maybe a distraction from its imminent attack on Mosul?)</p>	
8 June 2014		<p>Syria is a Somalia-style failed state that has blown up in the West's face - former UN envoy, <i>Telegraph</i>, Damien McElroy. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Syrian civil war can only be resolved in a political agreement that acknowledges that Assad is going to stay. UN envoy calls this a misconception that needs to be revised: Syrian gov was believed to fall easily, but it has not and won't. He suggests a peace agreement between opposition and Assad, and the UN to take care of securing peace and fight ISIS and AQ. <b>Interesting:</b> This is similar to what we see today, and this was even way before the Russians intervened. Very prescient!</p>	

10 June 2014	ISIS captures Mosul	<p>Islamist insurgents seize Iraqi city of Mosul, <i>FT</i>, Erika Solomon. <b>Interesting:</b> a comprehensive article about the fall of Mosul to ISIS. <b>Knowledge claims:</b> Mosul is in an oil-rich province and its takeover threatens to tip the country back into sectarian war. The article reminds that Mosul is the second Sunni urban centre lost to the extremist group. Fallujah was taken in January 2014. Quote: “‘The fall of Mosul to Isis reflects that Iraqi security forces are being outgunned by the Islamist militants across much of northern Iraq,’ said Jordan Perry, Middle East and north Africa analyst at Maplecroft, the political risk advisory.” Despite US help, “the militants are frequently better-armed and better-equipped than their Iraqi police counterparts.” Article predicts that through looting the city it has gained more resources and will use them in Syria against its rivals.</p>	
10 July 2014		<p>US alarmed at being dragged into fresh Iraq conflict, <i>FT</i>, Geoff Dyer. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> US thinks that the Maliki government is at the heart of the country’s sectarian problems. <b>Quote:</b> “The US is alarmed by both the prospect of a broader sectarian war in Iraq and by the fact that Isis now controls one of the country's biggest cities and an ever larger swath of territory spanning Iraq and Syria. However, the administration would like to avoid at all costs direct US military intervention in another Middle East conflict.” Also <b>mentions</b> the US’ previous military help: “US has already provided \$14bn of military equipment and services to Iraq”</p>	
10 June 2014		<p>Islamist fanatics’ fiefdom extends 200 miles across Syria and Iraq, <i>The Times</i>, Catherine Philp. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> This is what ISIS has been working on for the whole time and with seizing Mosul it controls large pieces of territory and can govern based on Sharia law.</p>	
11 June 2014		<p>Islamic extremists 'thank God' for Twitter, <i>Telegraph</i>, By Ruth Sherlock Beirut. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Twitter has become part and parcel of ISIS’ propaganda machinery.</p>	

11 June 2014		<p>Citizens flee after Islamist rebels take Iraq's second city, <i>The Times</i>, Catherine Philp. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> good summary of how fast and relatively easy it has been for ISIS to take Mosul and the province, mainly because the army stationed in Mosul chose not to oppose ISIS. This raises questions about what the US can do and whether more arms for the Iraqi army would bring anything. <b>Quote:</b> "Fighters armed with anti-aircraft weapons overran first the western bank of the city of 1.8 million people, then the entire province, after American-trained Iraqi soldiers and police deserted their posts, discarding arms and uniforms as they fled. 'When the battle got tough in the city of Mosul, the troops dropped their weapons and abandoned their posts, making it easy prey for the terrorists,' Osama al-Nujaifi, the speaker of the Iraqi parliament, said in a televised news conference."</p>	
11 June 2014		<p>Iraq crisis Q &amp; A: Who or what is ISIS? Is it part of al-Qaeda?, <i>Telegraph</i>, By Richard Spencer. <b>Knowledge claims:</b> a good recap how we got here. <b>Very interesting quote:</b> "How did no one see this coming?"</p> <p>Nouri al-Maliki, the Shia prime minister of Iraq, has been unable or unwilling to reach out to Sunni parts of the country – partly because his major electoral opposition in Iraq's sectarian politics comes from more extreme Shia factions. The United States left behind an informal militia of anti-al-Qaeda tribal chiefs known as the Sahwa, or Awakening, movement. But Mr Maliki saw them as hostile to him politically and reduced the salaries the Americans were paying them, making them gradually more and more alienated. al-Qaeda played on Sunni disillusionment with the Maliki administration. Saddam Hussein was Sunni and for Mr Maliki, it was too easy to portray them as remnants of the Saddam regime, but many had genuine grievances.</p> <p>Without some local support, it would have been impossible for ISIS to achieve what it did in Iraq. But the great spur has been the money</p>	



		and recruits that its operations in Syria have won it. For many Sunni sympathisers, particularly in the Gulf, ISIS represents the front line in a long war between Sunni Islam and what they regard as linked heresies – Shia Islam in Iraq and its backer Iran, and the Alawism of the Assad regime.”	
11 July 2014		Every US soldier who has fought there has the same question, <i>The Times</i> , Catherine Philp. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> All American marines ask: Were all the US efforts to help build the Iraqi army in vein? Now a lot of their equipment is in ISIS’ hand.	
11 June 2014		Iraq fractures beneath upsurge in tensions, <i>FT</i> , Roula Khalaf. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS’ surge is the fault of Maliki. Quote of a quote: “The Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies, described the country's threats, even before Mosul was seized by jihadis, as "self-inflicted wounds caused by its political leaders".”	
11 June 2014		Iraq's under-resourced army no match for Sunni insurgents, <i>FT</i> , Geoff Dyer. <b>Interesting:</b> <u>Particularly good article</u> about why the Iraqi army collapsed and ISIS could gain Mosul. <b>Knowledge claims:</b> It was A) because the US should never have dismantled Saddam’s army (like in Germany after the war, elites were kept). B) did a hasty job in building the army from scratch. Quote: “Training was hurried and largely inadequate, leaving them without discipline and prone to panic.” C) Mosul had always been a Sunni stronghold and the army was seen as Shia occupier (hence population’s support) D) Maliki for months called upon the international community to get help in the fight against ISIS. But this might have signalled to its army that they were up against an enemy stronger than ISIS really was (but the army thought they had no chance and did not fight because of that). E) ISIS videos scared the population and many fled.	
11 June 2014		The nightmare emerging in Iraq, <i>FT</i> . <b>Knowledge claim:</b> some more reasons for ISIS’ surge. One how corruption has affected the	

		army, as explained in the <b>quote</b> : Corruption is so endemic that the almost 1m-strong, US-trained Iraqi army and security forces suffer from basic supply and logistics problems.	
11 June 2014		Iraq crisis: what is ISIS?, <i>Telegraph</i> . <b>Knowledge claim</b> : a lot of the group's strength is coming from its leader al-Baghdadi.	
11 June 2014		Mosul capture shows resilience of Isis, <i>FT</i> , Erika Solomon. <b>Knowledge claim</b> : ISIS' rapid gain of territory was surprising. It was in parts due to their different strategy to AQ. First proclaiming the state, recruiting more members as they worked towards controlling territories.	
11 June 2014		Islamists seize Iraq's second-biggest city, <i>Guardian</i> , Martin Chulov and Dan Roberts. <b>Knowledge claim</b> : Description of ISIS' campaign on Mosul. <b>Quote re surprise</b> : "The rapid organisation and mobility of Isis has shocked leaders across the region"	
11 June 2014			Predictions revisited Iraq's troubles are years in the making, experts say, <i>CNN</i> , Greg Botelho. UK foreign secretary, William Hague, told CNN that he agrees that spillover from the Syrian civil war is contributing to regional unrest, namely in Iraq, which is why it is imperative to focus on a political solution in Syria coupled with some political progress in Iraq. (DocumentCNNWR00020140612ea6c001ba)
11 June 2014			No10 rules out sending troops back to Iraq, <i>The Sun</i> , Tom Newton Dunn and Steve Hawkes. 10 Downing Street has announced

			that aid to Iraq will be limited to diplomatic pressure. (DocumentTHESUK0020140611ea6b00462)
12 June 2014		Leading article: Iraq: The fall of Mosul, <i>Guardian</i> , editorial. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> It is Maliki's own fault. <b>Quote:</b> The swift collapse of security forces in the city suggests the appearance of government control was largely a sham, probably the result of an informal pact between them and the insurgents to leave one another alone. The transition from covert control to overt control is nevertheless very important, because it represents a huge public challenge to the Baghdad authorities	
12 June 2014		A powerful and merciless force has emerged on the world stage, <i>Telegraph</i> , Peter Osborne. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Describes the strength of ISIS as a formidable force in Iraq/Syria. <b>Quotes:</b> "Isis does levy taxes and controls a tranche of territory ranging from northern Iraq through to eastern Syria. No local army seems capable of confronting it. [...] Isis also has the range and power to strike at will in the West." <b>Another knowledge claim:</b> the West has supported Syrian rebels who have become ISIS – West responsible for ISIS! <b>Quote:</b> "The Western campaign to dislodge President Assad of Syria was another contributing factor. While our leaders were ready to call for Assad to go, they were unwilling to intervene directly to dislodge him. Instead, mainly through allies such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar, the West supported militant rebel groups which have since mutated into Isis and other al-Qaeda connected militias."	
12 June 2014		Islamic insurgents push Baghdad to the brink, <i>Times</i> , Catherine Philp. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> ISIS has had a very rapid surge, but has also set the conditions for a long-term control of territories, including securing money and oil fields to finances its regime. <b>Quotes:</b> calling it a "lightning surge."	
12 June 2014		Britain's failure to intervene in Syria sparked Iraq chaos, <i>Telegraph</i> , Matthew Holehouse. <b>Knowledge claim by UK foreign policy</b>	

		<p><b>adviser:</b> ISIS happened because UK had not intervened in Syria (allowing for a power vacuum to happen). <b>Quote:</b> “Al-Qaeda aligned militants have overrun a string of Iraq’s major cities because Britain created a “vacuum” in Syria, Nadhim Zahawi, a member of the No 10 policy board said.” [UK did not intervene because in July 2013 a left-wing majority in the UK parliament had voted against intervention] <b>Another knowledge claim (more tangible):</b> Another cause for ISIS rise is the decision in 2003 to disband the 700,000-man Iraqi army.</p>	
12 June 2014		<p>Iraq 'asks US for airstrikes' as al-Qaeda-linked militants vow to march on Baghdad, <i>Telegraph</i>, Colin Freeman. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> Maliki won’t be able to regain control without foreign intervention.</p>	
12 June 2014		<p>Iraqi forces by numbers: who has the biggest army?, <i>Telegraph</i>. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> in sheer numbers, the Iraqi army is by far the most powerful element, compared to the Peshmerga and ISIS. (As a reply to the article one can argue that factors like soldiers’ moral or Sunni disenchantment are much more important than military might)</p>	
12 June 2014		<p>Iraq’s future hangs in the balance, RUSI, <a href="#">commentary</a> by Michael Stephens. <b>Knowledge claim:</b> The Iraqi state has proved incapable to confront the crisis it is facing and needs external support. ISIS is feeding off the conflict in Syria and is expanding its territorial reach in Iraq as the Iraqi army suffers high desertion rates. <b>Quote:</b> “The conflict in Iraq is turning into a zero-sum game in which either the state wins and begins to reassert itself in areas of deep insecurity, or it loses and facilitates the beginning of a fragmentation in which Baghdad loses control over Anbar and Ninawa, as well as ceding more control to the Kurdistan regional government.”</p>	
12 June 2014			<p>On the brink of HELL: Al-Qaida offshoot behead protestors as they seize Iraq, <i>The Star</i>, Sophie</p>

			<p>Alexander. UK foreign secretary, William Hague, has ruled out British troops returning to Iraq, stating, “we left Iraq in the hands of elected Iraqi leaders with their own security forces...it’s very important that Iraqis take the leadership and responsibility of dealing with this, working with neighbouring countries”. Prime Minister David Cameron reiterated this statement, explaining that Iraq has always faced the challenge of tension between ethnic and religious groups, and that although this has often not been the case, Iraq needs a political leader which can unite all communities.</p> <p>(Document DAICO00020140612ea6c0035z)</p>
12 June 2014			<p>UK sends humanitarian team to Iraq, <i>Press Association National Newswire</i>, Andrew Woodcock and Joe Churcher. Britain has deployed a team of humanitarian experts to assess the needs of civilians in Iraq, as the UK may be able to assist given their “very large humanitarian budget”, according to William Hague. The UK foreign secretary reiterated that it is the responsibility of the</p>

			<p>democratically elected government of Iraq to respond to the crisis in the country.</p> <p>(DocumentPRESSA0020140612ea6c001md)</p>
12 June 2014			<p>Iraq Crisis: Mi6 hunting for Britons among Al Qaeda fighters, <i>The Telegraph</i>, Matthew Holehouse. The UK Prime Minister's office has said that there is an 'arc of extremism' stretching across the Middle East and British intelligence agencies are investigating whether British jihadists have joined fighting in Iraq. <b>Knowledge Claim:</b> Downing Street advisor, Nadhim Zahawi has said that the UK's failure to intervene in Syria has granted ISIS the space to "thrive".</p> <p>(Document TELUK00020140612ea6c003s5)</p>
13 June 2014			<p>British fanatics heading to Iraq to join ISIS militants, <i>Mail Online</i>, Harriet Arkell. A UK Foreign Office spokesperson has said that even those travelling to Syria for humanitarian reasons are exposed to the risk of being targeted for recruitment by terrorist groups and the government discourages them from travelling there.</p> <p>(DocumentDAMONL0020140613ea6d0053g)</p>

13 June 2014			British Muslim who ‘died’ in Syria comes back from the dead, <i>Mail Online</i> , Stephen Wright and Richard Marsden. A set of new laws have been unveiled in the UK which will permit people who are suspected of committing terror offences abroad to be prosecuted in the UK as though the offences occurred on British soil.
13 June 2014			UK offers security help to Iraq, <i>The Times</i> , Laura Pitel. Foreign secretary William Hague has said the UK government is considering its options on how to assist Iraq in its battle against ISIS, particularly counter-terrorist expertise, and barring military intervention. A Foreign Office source has claimed that a number of security experts have been proposed to advise the Iraqi government, although the Baghdad is yet to respond to the offer. (Document TIMEUK0020140613ea6e003dh)
13 June 2014			U.S. Department of the State, <i>FDCH Regulatory Intelligence Database</i> . At a press conference following the Summit on Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict, Uk foreign secretary William Hague says that the UK believes its focus

			<p>should be on 3 objectives regarding the crisis in Iraq. First, the Iraqi security forces and the KRG but stailise the situation. Second, Iraq's leadership must set aside their differences and work in unity in confronting the crisis in their country. Third, all efforts must be made to ensure the humanitarian situation does not deteriorate further.</p> <p>(Document FDCHRI0020140614ea6d0000g)</p>
14 June 2014			<p>Iraq crisis: UK to send Iraq £3m in non-military aid, <i>The Independent</i>, Jack Simpson. Britain's International Development Secretary has announced that the government will give £3 million in humanitarian aid to Iraq in the face of its crisis following the insurgency of ISIS.</p> <p>(Document INDOP00020140615ea6e0004z)</p>
19 June 2014			<p>UK <a href="#">Parliament</a> debate, "Middle East: Jihadism," 19 June 2014, Volume 754. <b>Quote:</b> "That political question raises some important issues which I invite the Minister to address. Is the policy of funding moderate opposition in Syria working? Do we need greater international co-operation across</p>



			this whole area, as the noble Lord, Lord Dykes, suggested? Could more be done to engage with Gulf states about the funding of this kind of extremism?"
July 2013 to October 2014			Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament, Annual Report 2013–2014, Chair: The Rt. Hon. Sir Malcolm Rifkind, MP. – This report does not talk about threat assessments.